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ABSTRACT

Researchers at the Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk (CRESPAR) have been studying the question of whether there are existing programs and practices that, if used nationwide, would actually improve the achievement of students placed at risk. The researchers' work and their studies of small-scale programs in many parts of the country lead them to say yes. Students placed at risk of academic failure are capable of achieving at levels that meet, and perhaps exceed, current national averages, and the strategies that can make this happen are already in place at some schools. Two replicable programs, the Comer School Development Program and CRESPAR's Success for All Program have resulted in remarkable gains on standardized tests. The next logical question is whether these programs can be scaled up for nationwide use. "Nationwide Scaling Up: Success for All/Roots & Wings" in this issue explores the ways these related programs (Roots & Wings adds mathematics, science, and social studies components to the Success for All reading program) have expanded to about 750 schools nationwide. "Scaling Up: School-Family-Community Partnerships" discusses the types of cooperation CRESPAR researchers have identified as necessary for program scaling up. "Scaling Up: The New American Schools in Memphis" reviews the success of the New American Schools program as implemented in Memphis (Tennessee). Other topics related to expanding programs for at-risk students in this issue are: (1) "School Reform Efforts for Low-Income African American Students Must Build on Knowledge about the Dynamics of Classroom Life"; (2) "Collaborating with Teachers To Broaden the Scope of Assessment in Schools"; (3) "A Literature Review Focuses on Asian American Students at Risk"; (4) "Parent Involvement Shifts from 8th to 12th Grades to Focus on College Attendance"; and (5) "Effects on Achievement and Best Designs of Volunteer

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Tutoring Programs Not Yet Known." Three research briefs of CRESPAR programs are also included. (Contains 20 references.) (SLD)

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Achieving Nationwide School Improvement through Widespread Use of Effective Programs and Practices.

CRESPAR Research and Development Report.
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CENTER FOR RESEARCH ON THE EDUCATION OF STUDENTS PLACED AT RISK

CRESPAR

Research & Development Report

September

IN THIS ISSUE...

Achieving Nationwide School Improvement Using Effective Programs and Practices 1

Scaling Up: Success for All Roots & Wings 2

Scaling Up: School-Family-Community Partnerships 4

Scaling Up: The New American Schools in Memphis 7

Dynamics of Classroom Life for Low-Income African American Students 9

Collaborating with Teachers to Broaden the Scope of Assessment 10

Literature Review Focuses on Asian American Students At Risk 12

Parent Involvement Shifts between 8th and 12th Grade to Focus on College Attendance 14

Effects of Volunteer Tutoring Programs Not Yet Known 15

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Achieving Nationwide School Improvement through Widespread Use of Effective Programs and Practices

BEFORE WE CAN TALK ABOUT MOVING EFFECTIVE PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES INTO WIDESPREAD USE, WE HAVE A PRELIMINARY QUESTION TO ADDRESS — DO WE HAVE EFFECTIVE PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES THAT, IF USED NATIONWIDE, WOULD ACTUALLY IMPROVE THE ACHIEVEMENT OF STUDENTS PLACED AT RISK?

CRESPAR RESEARCHERS SAY YES, based on the Center's own work to produce effective programs and on studies and analyses conducted to identify such programs. The Center's Success for All and Roots and Wings programs have ten years of longitudinal data supporting their effectiveness for increasing student reading achievement. The Center's High School and Middle School Talent Development models each now have two years of promising data. The Center's Action Team model for promoting school, family, and community partnerships is supported by almost a decade's worth of quantitative and qualitative evidence showing that schools can promote partnerships, which in turn can enhance student outcomes.

Many studies by CRESPAR researchers have also identified other programs and practices that are in small-scale use throughout the nation which have sufficient research evidence to suggest that they are effective in improving student achievement. In *Special Strategies for Educating Disadvantaged Children: Final Report*, Sam Stringfield et al. report the results of a three-year study to identify effective programs being used in Title I schools. The programs examined included Success for All, the Comer School Development Program, the Paideia Program, the Coalition of Essential Schools, Reading Recovery, individual schoolwide projects, and others. The researchers conducted research reviews and studied the programs in use in 25 urban, suburban, and rural schools.

Implementation of the programs varied among the sites and was almost always a struggle, influenced by local variables, availability of resources, the degree of staff, district, and state commitment, the amount of ongoing professional development, and other factors. But the CRESPAR researchers drew a positive conclusion from their findings: "Students placed at risk of academic failure are capable of achieving at levels that meet and perhaps exceed current national averages, and strategies for making this happen are already in place in some schools. The ability of disadvantaged students to achieve academically was clearly demonstrated at some of the Special Strategies sites." In particular, two replicable programs — the Comer School Development Program and Success for All — showed marked gains on standardized tests.

> "Schools can do a much better job of educating low-income and minority students, using methods and materials that are readily available."

Two other recent CRESPAR studies, both best-evidence reviews of the research, identify and present the evidence on effective programs and practices for students placed at risk. Olatokunbo Fashola and Robert Slavin, in "Promising Programs for Elementary and Middle Schools: Evidence of Effectiveness and Replicability," examine elementary and middle school programs in general. Then Fashola and Slavin, along with CRESPAR researchers Margarita Calderón and Richard Durán, also examine the research evidence on programs that might be effective specifically for Latino students. In both studies, the researchers conclude that: "Schools can do a much better job of educating low-income and minority students, using methods and materials that are readily available. There are approaches that are effective and appropriate for a wide variety of objectives."

School reform designs being developed as part of the New American Schools' five-year initiative are also beginning to show evidence of effectiveness as they are being implemented in schools and districts nationwide. This effort is now in its fourth year. Nine designs are described by CRESPAR researchers Sam Stringfield, Steve Ross, and Lana Smith in *Bold Plans for School Restructuring: The New American Schools Models*. The book provides an introductory chapter that discusses the New American Schools' vision, chapters on each of the designs, and a chapter that describes a formative assessment of the first year of implementation.

In another CRESPAR activity, the identification and documentation of effective schools for low-income African American students is being carried out by Beverly Cole-Henderson at Howard University. In a selected bibliography derived from examining approximately 2,000 documents, Cole-Henderson identifies numerous studies that report on school programs and practices that make a difference in achievement for low-income African American students.

Thus, during the past decade, a substantial number of school improvement programs have been developed and put into use in a limited number of schools. The logical next questions are: Can these restructuring programs be "scaled up" to widespread use in schools throughout the nation? Can they, in widespread use, maintain the effectiveness they've shown in more limited use? Can the time come when most schools in America are using proven effective programs and most students in America, and especially students now placed at risk, are achieving better because of them?

CRESPAR researchers are addressing these questions in a number of ways. As Center programs are themselves being scaled up for use nationwide, the researchers are studying the processes and problems involved. At the same time, research teams are studying other scaling up efforts, including the New American Schools process. ■

NATIONWIDE SCALING UP: Success for All/Roots & Wings

SUCCESS FOR ALL WAS PILOTED IN ONE BALTIMORE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN THE 1987-88 SCHOOL YEAR. IN 1988-89, IT WAS EXPANDED TO FIVE SCHOOLS IN BALTIMORE AND ONE IN PHILADELPHIA. BY 1996, IT WAS BEING IMPLEMENTED IN APPROXIMATELY 450 SCHOOLS IN 120 DISTRICTS IN 31 STATES. IN 1997-98, APPROXIMATELY 750 ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS NATIONWIDE WILL BE SUCCESS FOR ALL SCHOOLS, USING SFA ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES, INSTRUCTIONAL PROCESSES, AND CURRICULA. ABOUT 200 OF THESE SCHOOLS WILL ALSO BE MOVING TOWARD BECOMING FULL-FLEDGED ROOTS AND WINGS SCHOOLS, ADDING MATH, SCIENCE, AND SOCIAL STUDIES COMPONENTS TO THE BASIC SUCCESS FOR ALL READING AND WRITING COMPONENTS.

CRESPAR researchers are examining the factors involved in reaching this number of schools, maintaining strong implementations of the program in all of them, and continuing to expand to reach more schools. Robert Slavin and Nancy Madden have reviewed the dissemination strategies used with SFA — extensive awareness activities, school staff agreement on adoption of the program, clear information on funding requirements and sources, the establishment of a large cadre of Hopkins-based and regional-based trainers, extensive professional development, designation of a school SFA facilitator, the use of regional training sites, the formation of local and national networks of SFA schools, and work with state departments of education, regional laboratories, and district coordinators. Slavin and Madden highlight the following factors, among others, as effective elements of the scaling up of Success for All.

- A core of talented, dedicated trainers operating from the project's home and/or from regional training sites that maintain close coordination with the project's home.

- A local and national network of schools that are willing and able to provide technical and emotional support to schools entering the network. Madden and Slavin note that "To maintain over a long period of time, schools implementing innovations must be part of a national network of like-minded schools."

- The employment of staff from outstanding SFA schools to be full- or part-time trainers.

- Constant attention to the quality of training, implementation, and outcomes.

Slavin and Madden report much less success in dissemination efforts that depend on other agencies — such as state departments, district offices, and regional laboratories — unless those agencies devote full-time staff to the effort and coordinate closely with the home project. "Turnkey training" doesn't work, at least for a program as complex as Success for All.

In another study, CRESPAR researchers Robert Cooper, Slavin, and Madden explore the complexities of the structures, strategies, practices, and relationships that are associated with school change, examining the implementation and scaling up of SFA on three dimensions proposed by Jeannie Oakes — the technical, the normative, and the political — along with a fourth dimension that the researchers call the socio-cultural dimension. The goal is to examine school reform in the context of the beliefs, values, relationships, and power allocations that can make school reform successful or prevent it from happening.

The researchers examine data from a stratified sample of more than 300 Success for All schools across the country. The data are drawn from surveys, one-on-one interviews, group interviews, focus groups, and school site observations.

The *technical dimension* involves school structures, strategies, and practices — the pragmatic components of SFA that address teaching and organization in the school. Cooper, Slavin, and Madden find that three SFA components — a schoolwide reading curriculum, a restructured school schedule, and one-to-one tutoring for those students at greatest risk of school failure — provide the technical foundation for the program, with the quality of implementation and scaling up efforts leaning heavily on their replication.

The *normative dimension* involves the "values, ethos, and attitudes that drive policy and practice within urban schools." The researchers find that SFA implementation helps to change at least two attitudes or beliefs that are now the norm in many high-poverty schools — that parents do not care about the education of their children, and that not all students can learn at high levels. The Family Support Team component of SFA increases family involvement in the school and shows teachers and administrators that parents in poor communities do care about their children's learning and will participate in helping them learn. Schools using the total SFA program find that, given high standards, research-based instruction and curriculum, and help when it's needed, all students can indeed learn at high levels.

The *political dimension* involves how, when, and which individuals participate in reform, dealing with the relationships among educators, administrators, parents, and the community. It addresses issues such as who is promoting the program, who is going along reluctantly, who is actively fighting the implementation, and what implementation and scaling up features can deal with these issues in ways that bring everyone together and support everyone's efforts.

The researchers find two features that serve SFA schools well in the political dimension — a schoolwide buy-in requirement that gives teachers a voice in the reform process and, as found previously in the Slavin and Madden study, participation in a local support network that provides newly implementing SFA schools with technical and emotional support. In areas that have many Success for All schools, program facilitators and principals from different schools and even different districts meet monthly to share problems, solutions, ideas, and mutual support. The survey research findings especially show that the local support networks provide the schools with ongoing support, they create and maintain mutually beneficial relationships, and they strengthen the use of the program in the schools.

The *socio-cultural dimension* involves the social, cultural, and environmental factors that impact school reform. For SFA schools, one of the most salient of these dimensions is the high level of poverty in the communities in which most SFA schools are located, which produces many obstacles to reform. The researchers note that poverty-related issues such as high levels of drug use, crime, and violence "require school officials to respond to the physical, emotional, and psychological, as well as academic, needs of children."

Again, the SFA Family Support Team component provides schools with a structure and organized approach to involve families and to provide assistance that families and children need to maintain children's success in school.

Cooper, Slavin, and Madden, based on their examination of how SFA addresses the four dimensions of school change, conclude that implementation and scaling up must focus on schoolwide programs that are comprehensive and able to fundamentally change the organization and operation of schools. The SFA experience thus far shows that such programs can be broad enough in scope to address the interconnected complexities of teaching and learning, yet flexible enough to adapt to the local context in which the programs are being implemented. ■

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SCALING UP: School-Family-Community Partnerships

CRESPAR RESEARCHERS IN THE SCHOOL-FAMILY-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM ARE DEDICATED TO HELPING SCHOOLS NATIONWIDE TO ESTABLISH PROGRAMS OF PARTNERSHIPS AND USE EFFECTIVE PROCESSES AND PRACTICES TO INVOLVE FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES. THE RESEARCHERS ARE ENGAGED IN CARRYING OUT AND STUDYING THE RESULTS OF TWO SCALING UP OPERATIONS: (1) THE SCALING UP OF THE USE OF EFFECTIVE PROGRAMS OF PARTNERSHIP FROM A FEW SCHOOLS IN A LARGE DISTRICT TO ALL SCHOOLS IN THE DISTRICT; AND (2) THE SCALING UP OF THE USE OF EFFECTIVE PROGRAMS OF PARTNERSHIP IN SCHOOLS THROUGHOUT THE NATION.

The researchers have developed, over the past decade, a school, family, and community partnership program that schools can use to develop comprehensive programs and effective practices. The approach includes:

- **a theoretical base that describes overlapping spheres of influence.** There are responsibilities for promoting children's learning and development that are shared by schools, families, and communities, and they need to be working together on them;

- **a framework of six types of involvement derived from the theory that grew from research and that helps explain the theory.** Educators, families, and community members participate in helping families with parenting and child-rearing skills (Type 1); communicating about school programs and children's progress (Type 2); promoting family involvement as volunteers (Type 3); involving families with children in academic activities at home (Type 4); promoting family involvement in school decision-making processes (Type 5); and obtaining resources and services from the community (Type 6).

- **in each school, an Action Team for School-Family-Community Partnerships that guides the development and implementation of a program of activities addressing the six major types of involvement.** The Action Team consists of at least six members including teachers, parents, and administrators, and may also include counselors, students (in high schools), and community members. In each school, the Action Team inventories the school's present practices of involvement, identifies what's worth continuing and what isn't, creates a three-year outline of goals, objectives, and (based on their inventory) ways to maintain, improve, or add partnership practices, and then writes a detailed one-year action plan describing activities for the first year and how they will be carried out and evaluated.

A basic premise is that all schools will implement these components, but the partnership activities actually carried out under the six types will vary, depending on each school's needs, interests, and goals.

Implementations of this approach for school-family-community partnerships in many elementary, middle, and high schools have produced a number of outcomes: improved student attendance and achievements; increased communications with high-poverty urban parents; increased parental participation in school activities; more parents working with their children at home on schoolwork (with beneficial effects on student learning and attitudes); and others. The research shows that this is an effective approach. Can it be scaled up so that eventually a critical mass of schools throughout the nation are not only using the framework but also producing the intended benefits?

Districtwide Scaling Up: School-Family-Community Partnerships

A districtwide scaling up of this program in the Baltimore City Public Schools is occurring incrementally but purposefully, adding a significant number of schools in the district each year until all schools in the district are using the program.

CRESPAR school-family-community partnership researchers and staff (Joyce Epstein, Mavis Sanders, Karen Clark Salinas, Beth Simon) are engaged in carrying out this incremental approach with Baltimore City administrators, teachers, parents, and facilitators. Baltimore's participation began in 1987 with a pilot project in eight elementary and middle schools. In 1992, the more fully developed program was replicated in fifteen schools. In 1994, twenty-four elementary and middle schools in Baltimore's southern region began implementation; in 1995, twenty-five elementary and middle schools in the northwest region also began using the program; now, in the 1996-97 school year, a total of 80 schools in three geographic areas of Baltimore City are developing and carrying out school-family-community partnerships using the program. The researchers estimate scaling up to 150-175 schools for the 1997-98 school year,

covering all six geographic areas in Baltimore City.

Epstein and Sanders, documenting the scale-up, have noted some basic features that facilitate the process of moving the program into districtwide use.

Schools and the district need to be able to document positive results. Sanders examined the program's activities and effects in case studies of six schools, four elementary and two middle. She found that the schools were setting up appropriate action teams that were actively addressing all six types of school-family-community partnerships, including partnerships that linked to the curriculum and student learning and the ability of families to assist in student learning. Empirical analyses by Epstein and others of data collected by the state (Maryland) on attendance and achievement are showing early effects on these outcomes that are linked to the partnership activity.

The model is schoolwide and structured to be replicable. The schools examined by Sanders noted that much of their success in developing stronger connections with their families and communities was due to the structure of the action teams (which makes the program a schoolwide effort involving almost everyone) and the application of the framework of six types of involvement (which structured the work of the Teams as they designed and carried out their activities).

A full-time facilitator assists schools in their development and implementation of the model. Each geographic region using the model in Baltimore has assigned a full-time facilitator to work with up to 30 schools on their programs of partnership. The facilitators meet at least monthly to assist each school and respond on call to special needs for assistance. They also meet monthly with CRESPAR researchers to review progress and discuss problems. Schools examined by Sanders affirmed the importance of the facilitator in supporting and helping them carry out their work.

Schools receive or get basic funding to conduct their activities. The work of the action team and the implementation of activities requires some expenditures that need to be available in a specified budget for partnerships. In Baltimore in 1996-97, the State of Maryland (also a partner in this program) provided many schools with a small amount of funding to support their partnership activities. Schools also carve out a budget from Title I, Title VI, PTA, or other sources.

Support networks provide interaction, communication, and support among schools and geographic areas, and link local efforts to national efforts. School action teams from each geographic area share best practices, problems and solutions, and plans for further progress at quarterly cluster meetings for groups of schools and at end-of-year celebration workshops for all schools in the region. In addition, the Baltimore City Public Schools district and each individual school are members of the National Network of Partnership-2000 Schools.

Nationwide Scaling Up: School-Family-Community Partnerships

The nationwide scaling up of the school-family-community partnerships program is being conducted through the formation of the National Network of Partnership-2000 Schools, which invites membership by state departments of education, districts, and individual schools, and provides them with the guidance, materials, and professional development needed to develop the program at state, district, and school levels.

NATIONWIDE SCALE-UP OF PARTNERSHIP-2000 SCHOOLS — AT A GLANCE —

The CRESPAR research team finds that major advances have been made by some state members, some districts, and many individual schools as implementation of the model becomes national in scope. Examples include:

State Level. The state leaders of the Maryland Partnership-2000 Initiative conducted an RFP that gives $5000 to each of the eight districts and $1000 to over 50 schools' Action Teams for School, Family, and Community Partnerships to conduct the activities planned as members of the Network. Ohio has initiated a large RFP process to award planning grants and to provide training for over 200 schools that join the National Network of Partnership-2000 Schools for 1997-98 and start their work on comprehensive programs of school, family, and community partnerships. The schools are slated to receive $500, with options for about 40 demonstration/implementation grants later on.

District Level. Sacramento has invited its next fifteen schools to join the National Network of Partnership-2000 Schools, and provided training for their Action Teams. Three districts and 23 schools will form a consortium in the Ypsilanti, Michigan area in collaboration with professors from Eastern Michigan University, creating important university-school partnerships in that area.

School Level. School Action Teams in the 555 partnership schools are developing and implementing numerous activities that address all six types of partnership. For example, a Connecticut school runs a Family Connection program that addresses student writing skills and parent-child interactions; a Florida school is promoting interactive homework.

The Network was initiated in 1996, an attracted about 280 members for th 1996-97 school year. The membership for the 1997-98 school year will include eight states, about 50 districts, and over 650 schools (some of whose districts and states are also members). Other schools, districts, and states are in the process of completing membership forms for the 1997-98 school year.

States, districts, and schools that join the Network are provided with manuals, certificates, newsletters, training workshops, collections of best practices, e-mail and web site assistance, and opportunities to participate in research projects. In turn, the states, districts, and schools have a buy-in process — they commit in writing to funding their staff of facilitators and partnership activities, to reporting year-end progress, and to implementing the components of the program (Action Teams working with the six types of partnership) as specified.

Factors that Support National Scale-Up for School-Family-Community Partnerships

The factors cited in the Baltimore City district scaling up process all apply to scaling up on a national level — the need to show results, the need for a program that is structured to be replicable and which includes materials that support its use, the need for district facilitators to work with schools, the need for basic funding, and the need for local and national support networks.

CRESPAR researchers Simon, Epstein, Sanders, and Salinas, analyzing data gathered from the first 222 schools enrolled in the National Network of Partnership-2000 Schools, found a number of other factors related to the national scaling up of the program.

- The program can reach diverse schools. Socioeconomic status and racial/ethnic composition of Partnership-2000 schools covered a wide range.

- Elementary schools joining the partnership have stronger initial programs than do middle and high schools, and schools that serve poorer students have weaker programs initially. All schools, however, can progress from their starting points to strengthen their connections with families and communities.

- Direct district assistance to schools is more important than district policies for enabling schools to develop strong programs. In short, districts need to do more than say that they support partnerships; they need to provide their schools with funding and facilitation.

- Schools and districts that use some of their funding to establish a paid coordinator position for the program at their school are able to implement stronger programs.

The national support network — the Network of Partnership 2000 Schools — is the primary national scaling up mechanism for helping schools, districts, and state departments of education develop, implement, and scale up positive and permanent programs of school, family, and community partnerships. ■

CRESPAR researchers and their colleagues have drawn some implications about what kinds of federal, state, and local policies would be helpful in achieving scale-up, and thus improving academic achievement and other outcomes for students placed at risk. Some of these implications are presented in the following four publications.

Reforming State and Federal Policies to Support Adoption of Proven Practices (Robert Slavin), *Educational Researcher*, December 1996. This article argues that state and federal policies, in order to achieve school reform, need to support change in classroom practice in the use of more effective instructional methods. Policies need to address how school staffs can be enabled to make informed choices among proven, replicable alternative programs; how the development and evaluation of programs capable of meeting national goals can be funded; how funds provided to schools can be tied to the adoption of effective practices; and how local capacities can be built to identify, support, and evaluate innovative programs. The article concludes that state and federal policies must be directed toward putting in teachers' hands the tools they need to enable all children to meet the demanding standards required by our society, our economy, and our political leadership.

Design Competitions: A Proposal for a New Federal Role in Educational Research and Development (Robert Slavin), *Educational Researcher*, January/February 1997. This article proposes a radically different approach to educational research and development to supplement the Office of Educational Research and Improvement's (OERI's) existing centers and field-initiated studies. The approach emphasizes design competitions, in which the U.S. Department of Education specifies a competition to produce effective designs for improving education, and funds a select number of proposals to design, pilot, and formatively evaluate such programs. The process is similar to that implemented by the New American Schools.

Title I Implications for Comprehensive School-Family-Community Partnerships: Using Theory and Research to Realize the Potential (Joyce Epstein and John Hollifield), *Journal of Education for Students Placed At Risk*, Vol. I, No. 3. This article reviews and interprets Title I's requirements for parent and community involvement in both schoolwide programs and targeted assistance schools, summarizes recent research on the effects of school-family partnerships, and describes two major research-based comprehensive programs.

Impediments to Reform: An Analysis of Destabilizing Issues in Ten Promising Programs (Eugene Schaffer, Pamela Nesselrodt, and Sam Stringfield), Arlington VA: Educational Research Service, 1997. This publication alerts policy makers and practitioners to areas identified by research as potential impediments to the successful implementation of effective programs and practices, and suggests strategies and policies for overcoming these impediments.

SCALING UP:
The New American Schools in Memphis

NEW AMERICAN SCHOOLS (NAS) IS A PRIVATE NONPROFIT CORPORATION FUNDED FROM CONTRIBUTIONS FROM BUSINESS, INDUSTRY, AND FOUNDATIONS. THE CORPORATION HAS FUNDED THE DEVELOPMENT OF "EFFECTIVE DESIGNS" FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT AND IS ENGAGING IN NATIONAL SCALING UP OF THE USE OF THE DESIGNS. IN THE SCALE-UP, STATES AND DISTRICTS SIGN ON TO BECOME NAS JURISDICTIONS, COMMITTED TO SELECTING AND IMPLEMENTING A "CRITICAL MASS" OF THE NAS DESIGNS IN THEIR SCHOOLS.

CRESPAR researchers are following and studying the process and the results of the scaling up effort in one jurisdiction —the Memphis (Tennessee) City School District. Their study provides another example of how the scaling up process may work in one district, moving from the use of effective designs in a selected number of schools to the use of the designs in a large number of schools — a critical mass — in the district.

Memphis City Schools serve an 80+% minority population with a mean poverty rate that is high even for urban districts. The question addressed in Memphis is straightforward — given district support, can a critical mass of schools in a large urban school district select effective restructuring programs, implement them, maintain them, and make a difference in the achievement of their students?

During the Spring of 1995, over 90 Memphis City Schools attended an "exposition" featuring six New American Schools (NAS) designs plus the Accelerated Schools and Paideia designs. The six NAS designs were ATLAS Schools, the Audrey Cohen College model, CoNECT Schools, Expeditionary Learning/Outward Bound, Modern Red Schoolhouse, and Roots and Wings. Over 50 school faculties proposed implementation of one of the designs, and 34 were funded to begin implementation over the Summer of 1995. The CRESPAR team began gathering data before the exposition, and will continue the data collection and study through 1999 and perhaps beyond.

The researchers present preliminary evidence that scaling up is occurring — by the Spring of 1997, over 45 Memphis schools had selected and were implementing one of the eight designs. The researchers also report, based on case studies in 16 schools, information about which designs are easiest to implement, which designs in which schools are proceeding well or not so well, and what kinds of district adaptations and supports are helpful or not helpful in the scaling up process.

First year data gathering at the sites included classroom observations, teacher interviews and focus groups, and principal interviews. Outcome data (attendance and achievement) were made available by the Memphis City Schools. The researchers reported on the first year of implementation of the designs in a special issue of the international, refereed journal, *School Effectiveness and School Improvement (SESI)*, edited by Amanda Datnow and Sam Stringfield of Johns Hopkins. First year findings are detailed in the various articles of the *SESI* special issue, and evaluation outcomes are synthesized by CRESPAR researcher Steven Ross and others at the University of Memphis. The findings include:

Selection of Designs

Over one-half of the schools in Memphis City Schools expressed a sufficient level of interest in the designs to send a team of teachers, administrators, and community leaders to the initial exposition.

All eight of the school restructuring designs were found to be sufficiently attractive to merit proposed implementation by at least four schools.

Except for Roots and Wings, there were no obvious demographic differences among schools selecting the various designs. All schools choosing Roots and Wings served high-poverty communities and intended to use Title I schoolwide project funds to support the designs. A variety of restructuring designs were found attractive by diverse schools for equally diverse reasons.

Initial Reaction to Pre-Implementation Preparation and Early Restructuring Experiences

With the exception of Paideia training, Memphis City Schools' teachers perceived the Summer 1995 training to be generally insufficient. Interestingly, the Paideia training was provided exclusively by other Tennessee teachers who had years of experience implementing Paideia, whereas other training teams

were dominated by team-based developers and professional trainers. Teachers tended to conclude that the design teams' training lacked the levels of specificity they believed they would need to implement the designs.

The three designs which teachers rated most likely to have positive impact on student achievement were Roots and Wings, Paideia, and Modern Red Schoolhouse. However, nearly a third of teachers reported that they were unsure of the outcome effects on students, with the largest category of uncertainty being teachers who felt it was "too early to tell" the eventual effects.

By mid-Fall of 1995, teachers in schools that chose designs that specified general outlines but left the specifics of curriculum development to individual schools were the most likely to report a feeling of being overworked.

Predictors of Success in First-Year Implementation

Common perceptions of strengths included the revitalization of schools and teachers, and the initiation of new school organizations and teaching strategies.

Common concerns involved the need for more focused training, more time for teacher collaboration, and strategies for integrating curricular and learning activities with the skills assessed by state-mandated testing.

Designs that appeared to demonstrate the most substantive first-year changes in teaching and learning activities included Audrey Cohen College at the elementary school level, Roots and Wings (all elementary), and Paideia (middle and high school).

Designs that appeared to demonstrate the most first-year progress in team building and goal setting included Accelerated Schools, Co-NECT, and ATLAS.

In an analysis of schools (independent of specific programs) experiencing the most initial success in implementing the reforms, the following conclusions were drawn:

- All of the restructuring efforts require a great deal of energy, time, and commitment from the teachers, administrators, and school community.

- Restructuring initiatives that provided classroom materials and guidelines for instruction generally started faster than designs emphasizing teacher-developed materials.

- Issues of focused leadership and ongoing, long-term, focused professional development appeared likely to determine substantial parts of the long-term successes of the schools. However, relative to what might be called "reasonable progress," the Memphis start-up implementations were successful — with no unresolvable problems. ■

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EDITORIAL SCOPE

The goals of the journal are to provide the best research-based information possible to professionals involved with improving the education of students placed at risk, and to promote the use of that information through effective communications among researchers, policymakers, and practitioners.

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THE JOURNAL OF NEGRO EDUCATION

JNE

The *Journal of Negro Education (JNE)* is published quarterly by Howard University Press at Howard University. Sylvia Johnson serves as editor-in-chief and D. Kamili Anderson serves as associate editor.

EDITORIAL SCOPE

The purpose of the journal is threefold: first, to stimulate the collection and facilitate the dissemination of facts about the education of Black people; second, to present discussions involving critical appraisals of the proposals and practices relating to the education of Black people; and third, to stimulate and sponsor investigations of issues incidental to the education of Black people.

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School Reform Efforts for Low-Income African American Students Must Build on Knowledge about the Dynamics of Classroom Life

THE SCALING UP OF EFFECTIVE PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES, BY DEFINITION, REQUIRES THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THESE PROGRAMS IN SCHOOLS, BUT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF REFORM HAS NEVER BEEN A STRONG POINT OF RESEARCHERS, POLICY MAKERS, OR PRACTITIONERS. AGAIN AND AGAIN, REFORMS FAIL TO OCCUR, OCCUR ONLY IN DRASTICALLY REDUCED OR PERVERTED FORM, OR OCCUR BUT THEN EXPIRE OVER TIME AS THEY MEET HEAD-ON WITH THE REALITIES OF CURRENT SCHOOL CONTEXTS, PRACTICES, AND STRUCTURES.

One way to improve the track record for implementation of reform in schools that serve low-income African American children placed at risk of academic failure is through developing a descriptive, in-depth knowledge base on the dynamics of classroom life in these schools. We need to know what is happening with these children in their schools and classrooms, and obtain information on how it is happening and why it is happening. From such a knowledge base, we can anticipate the real-life obstacles to reform and develop ways to overcome those obstacles; we can provide guidance for developing specific school reforms that will benefit low-income African American children; we can help to better target and more successfully conduct professional development activities, and we can develop components and procedures that will make our currently effective programs and practices not only more effective but also more easily implemented.

Through intensive direct classroom observation and focus group interviews in six elementary schools in low-income African American communities in an urban area, Howard University CRESPAR researchers A. Wade Boykin, Constance Ellison, Donna Penn Towns, and Almeta Stokes and their graduate students are identifying and describing the classroom life of children in five categories:

Social/psychological — what social and psychological characteristics do the children and their teachers typically display?

Technical core of instruction — what is the technical core of instruction upon which student achievement is based (what is being taught and how)?

Structure of the learning environment — how are classrooms physically organized and what are the structures of daily classroom life?

Discipline and classroom management — what are the typical forms of discipline, incentives, and feedback that teachers employ?

Perception of the learning environment — what are the various perceptions of classroom life held by teachers and students?

Data gathered from both the classroom observations and the focus group interviews are being linked to each of these categories and to socio-linguistic and cultural themes. Socio-linguistic themes reveal the essential role that communication plays in the teaching/learning process and relate not only to what is being said, but how it is being said, who is saying it, and to whom. Emerging themes in these classrooms involve code-switching between vernacular and standard speech and the use of affective language. Cultural themes relate to how observed behaviors and expressions reflect ten cultural dimensions — movement, verve, affect, orality, communalism, individualism, competition, object orientation, cognition or affect, and bureaucracy orientation.

In brief, the classroom cultural ecology research team is compiling and analyzing extensive data on the daily routines and activities that transpire in classrooms serving African American children from low-income backgrounds. Its purpose is to provide as complete a description as possible of the dynamics of classroom life for poor African American children in urban schools.

What Is Happening in These Classrooms?

A multitude of preliminary findings are emerging from analyses of the observational and focus group data. Examining the observational data, the CRESPAR researchers have begun enumerating sets of multiple findings on each of the five dimensions. A small sample of the findings includes:

In the social/psychological category ▪ Personality and demeanor of the teacher is a major factor in setting the tone for the classroom on any given day. ▪ Teachers place substantial emphasis on time and time management. ▪ Teachers try to maintain a "cult of quietness" in the classroom. Students resist this and are constantly being told to be quiet.

In the technical core of instruction category ▪ Teachers use a great deal of group instructional activities, during which there seem to be fewer disciplinary problems than during individual learning activities. ▪ Instructional feedback to students is generally positive and occurs on a regular basis. ▪ Teachers typically make the assumption that all students are on the same instructional level.

In the structure of the learning environment category ▪ There are a host of classroom routines and rituals that students must be familiar with and obey or they are disciplined. ▪ There are constant interruptions from outside of the classroom.

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In the discipline and classroom management category ▪ Teachers who set pleasant tones for the day tended to use indirect and cooperative forms of commands, while those who did not tended to give orders in a more direct and authoritarian way. ▪ Teachers use nonverbal modes of disciplining and managing in the classroom including turning lights off and on, standing in silence until students are quiet, taking time out, and having students put their heads on their desks.

In the perceptions of the learning environment category ▪ Some teachers exhibit expectations of success for their students through using such expressions as "my beautiful and intelligent African American students." ▪ Teachers expect students to obey classroom rules and to respect and obey the teacher and other designated students.

What the Students Say

Focus group discussions included 37 low-income African American elementary school children in grades one through six. Discussions were based on the five conceptual categories described above.

In the focus group discussions, held separately with students in grades 1-2, 3-4, and 5-6, the children provided extensive detail about their life in the classroom. They discussed engagement in group work, the need to follow rules and regulations and what would happen when they didn't, their relationships with one another and with the teacher, their teacher's use of praise and other rewards — in short, multiple facets of the five conceptual categories. The researchers found that these children, who had been selected by their schools to participate in the focus groups, consistently perceived their environment as a positive one, and felt that their teachers wanted to help them learn and succeed in the classroom.

Building the Knowledge Base

The CRESPAR researchers note that they have made "an initial step toward the development of a holistic conceptual approach to viewing the ecology of classrooms." In other words, they have begun the development of a full-scale description of the actual experiences that low-income African American children are having in their classrooms. They are delineating the existing routines, practices, and structures that these students live with each day, and documenting the attitudes and perceptions of not only the students but also their teachers. They are building the knowledge base from which more effective programs can be launched and from which more effective implementation can be accomplished. ■

Collaborating with Teachers to Broaden the Scope of Assessment in Schools

A MOVE TO THE WIDESPREAD USE OF PERFORMANCE-BASED EDUCATION IN OUR NATION'S SCHOOLS IS IN PROGRESS. MANY STATES HAVE ESTABLISHED OR ARE DEVELOPING PERFORMANCE STANDARDS BASED ON MODELS DEVELOPED BY VARIOUS EDUCATION ORGANIZATIONS AND ASSOCIATIONS (E.G., NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF MATHEMATICS). IN MANY SCHOOLS, TEACHERS ARE CHANGING THEIR INSTRUCTION TO ADDRESS THE STANDARDS, WHICH MEANS THEY'RE FOCUSING ON HELPING STUDENTS NOT ONLY LEARN INFORMATION, BUT ALSO APPLY WHAT THEY LEARN — THEY'RE STRESSING COOPERATIVE LEARNING, ACTIVE LEARNING, PROBLEM SOLVING, HANDS-ON EXPERIENCES, AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS. IN ADDITION, ALMOST ALL CURRENT WHOLE-SCHOOL REFORM PROGRAMS (SUCH AS CRESPAR'S TALENT DEVELOPMENT MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAMS) STRESS PERFORMANCE-BASED INSTRUCTION AND CURRICULUM.

But a key element of the standards-based movement is lagging behind — the development and integration of appropriate and valid performance-based assessments. Too often, although some standardized tests makers are trying to incorporate performance activities, students involved in performance-based instruction and curricula may find themselves being assessed on standardized tests that emphasize what has been learned rather than how students can apply what they've learned.

A District of Columbia teacher who uses performance-based instruction based on the *Mathematics in Context* curriculum sums up her assessment concerns as follows: "The children are accustomed to one thing, and then you put this test in front of them, and it's just different... it's

pencil and paper, manipulation of numbers, and then the kinds of problems they have to solve are not the kinds that are in the...curriculum."

CRESPAR researchers Sylvia Johnson, Gerunda Hughes, Sheila Thompson, and Michael Wallace at Howard University are working with District of Columbia middle school math teachers to determine how performance-based assessment — e.g., the use of projects, performance demonstrations, and portfolios — can take its rightful place in the performance-based education movement. The researchers and teachers are involved in the development of a collaborative to learn about, develop, and integrate performance-based assessment into their classrooms. The CRESPAR researchers have observed staff development activities to see how performance-based assessment is currently included, surveyed middle school mathematics teachers about their concerns for implementing reform, conducted focus group interviews to examine teachers' attitudes toward and perceptions of their role in school reform, and held in-service sessions for middle and high school mathematics teachers during the 1996-97 school year.

Summer Institute Observations

At the Mathematics, Science and Technology Initiative (MSTI) Summer Institute in 1996, District of Columbia teachers were introduced to *Mathematics in Context*, a performance-based education curriculum. They played the role of middle school students by working through the performance-based units.

In one unit, for example, they grew beans and discussed ways to present data on their project through charts and graphs, group skits, demonstrations using the metric system, and preparation of museum exhibits. Other teachers who had been using the curriculum served as facilitators, modeling the role of the teacher in an interactive performance-based program.

CRESPAR observers found that the teachers were interested in and enthusiastic about implementing performance-based curricula, but they were apprehensive about the lack of systematic assessment for both teachers and students. They asked: How well-versed will the "higher ups" be about the processes or about the goals and assumptions? How will teachers be evaluated since there is no list of objectives? And, if standardized tests like the SAT do not adequately assess student performance on the new standards, then how does one decide whether a child has demonstrated mastery in the classroom?

Survey of Middle School Mathematics Teachers

CRESPAR researchers surveyed 53 middle school math teachers who attended the summer institute to get their attitudes toward and opinions about curriculum change and performance-based assessment. Analyses of the data showed that:

- The teachers felt they were able to carry out school reform. Half of the respondents said they have "almost complete freedom" to do what they think is best in their teaching situation and the same number had "a lot" of control over decisions involving content, topics, and skills to be taught.

- The teachers were ready for reform. Although most had been teaching at the middle school level and teaching math for 21 years or more, 96% felt confident in changing their teaching methods and 92% felt confident in implementing change in the area of classroom assessment. After working on alternative assessments, over 40% indicated great change in their expectations for student learning and performance and nearly 27% said they had changed their attitude toward assessment in general.

Focus Group Interviews

Six of the middle school math teachers who had implemented *Mathematics in Context* in the 1995-96 school year and contributed to the summer institute participated in focus group interviews. These teachers described their role in performance-based education as facilitators instead of lecturers — encouraging students, promoting creativity, and allowing students to do more discovery. They worked less from a textbook and initiated more cooperative group work in the classroom. They reported that this translated into a much noisier classroom, but it also produced much more interested, motivated, and enthusiastic students. These teachers also voiced concerns about the mismatch of standardized tests in relation to assessing a performance-based program.

In-Service Sessions

Over the course of the 1996-97 school year, CRESPAR researchers facilitated in-service sessions for District of Columbia middle school mathematics teachers on the construction and use of performance-based assessment. These sessions introduced the fundamental concepts of alternative assessments and their use in the classroom; provided guidance on modifying classroom management, instruction, and evaluation skills; suggested ways to better understand students' problem-solving and critical-thinking skills through discussions of psychological principles in the development of assessment, and showed teachers how to interpret scores and articulate results of performance to students and parents. Teachers were also shown how to design classroom-based research on performance assessments and how to report the results of this kind of research.

Implications

To move into widespread use and make a difference in the achievement of students placed at risk, performance-based education requires performance-based assessment. This CRESPAR work shows that many teachers are ready and able to learn about and use alternative assessments. It also shows that teacher development workshops can be designed by school systems in collaboration with university partners and teachers to help teachers incorporate these assessments into their performance-based instruction and curriculum. ■

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A Literature Review Focuses on Asian American Students At Risk

"THE DIVERSITY IN COUNTRY OF ORIGIN, LANGUAGE, SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS, EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND, AND DEGREE OF ACCULTURATION MAKES IT VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE TO MAKE GENERALIZATIONS ABOUT CONTEMPORARY ASIAN AMERICANS," SAYS CRESPAR RESEARCHER SAU-FONG SIU OF WHEELOCK COLLEGE.

Evaluating the current research on at-risk Asian American students, Siu finds that generalizations, especially the depiction of Asian Americans as the "model minority," mask the problems that many Asian American students face. The lack of comprehensive and reliable data on the academic achievement of Asian American students is one problem in the research. The confusion around the designation of the term "Asian American" is another.

In the United States, seven million people — 2.9% of the population and 3.5% of the students — check "Asian American" or "Asian Pacific' on forms and standardized tests. Yet the term includes over 25 ethnicities; it includes many more languages; it includes U.S. citizens; it includes immigrants, and it includes refugees. And the often combined terms of Asian American and Pacific Islander create more problems in distinguishing very different groups.

The distinct characteristics of the Asian American ethnicities are more often determined by sociohistorical situations, like terms of immigration and history in the U.S., than by ethnicity. Thus Filipino, Japanese, Northern Chinese, and Asian Indian immigrant groups have higher educational and occupational levels than Southeast Asian immigrants, primarily because of their different social histories.

Southeast Asian Students Are Most At Risk

Siu shows that when "Asian American" data are broken down to compare specific ethnic groups, profound differences in achievement become clear. For example, while 5.6% of Japanese Americans have only an elementary education at most, 61% of Hmong Americans are in the same category. Examining the great number of studies that look specifically at the rising population of Southeast Asian immigrants and refugees and the at-risk status of their youths, Siu concludes that "Southeast Asian students are more likely to be at risk of school failure or of dropping out than students of other Asian American ethnic groups."

What factors make some Asian American students more likely than others to fail in school or not complete high school? Siu examines analyses that focus solely on the student and family responsibilities, but also looks at risk factors that may arise from the classroom/school context and the community/societal context.

Individual and Family

Siu cites history of schooling, reasons for coming to the U.S., and exposure to emotional trauma as some of the individual characteristics that relate to being at risk. An individual's risk is unquestionably related to family characteristics. Children in the poorest ethnic groups are most at risk, but Siu holds that it is not only a question of money: "Parents with economic survival needs have related stresses that make it hard for them to provide the supervision and support a student needs to succeed in school." Parents' educational level, supervision and support, and family priorities and expectations are among the factors that may be related to socioeconomic status and that do contribute to a child's risk.

Differences in socioeconomic status are also apparent. Among the Asian ethnic groups, Southeast Asians — particularly Hmongs and Cambodians — are the poorest. In these families, the necessity for the child may become work over study. Also, only 8% of Hmongs have had some formal education in their home land, so they are limited in being able to provide academic assistance or general guidance about schooling to their children.

Classroom and School Factors Related to Risk

Siu finds that most schools cannot adequately meet their responsibility to provide quality instruction by trained and/or bilingual staff (the shortage is particularly great for Mien-speaking, Khmer-speaking, and Laotian-speaking students). Proper assessment and placement into classes is difficult. While some students are pushed into fluent English proficiency (FEP) classes too quickly, others are inappropriately placed into less challenging classes or special education. Schools need to offer adequate orientation and parent involvement programs to bring about parent interaction. But, Siu notes, "School personnel

sometimes inadvertently put up barriers...through cultural insensitivity, no welcome signs, no translation or interpretation, poor outreach and follow-up, and lack of respect."

The degree of parents' participation in school activities, such as reading report cards and meeting with teachers, "is a function of parents' socioeconomic status, literacy in the native language, proficiency in English, pre-arrival educational experience, and knowledge of what schools expect of them," reports Siu. "It is not unexpected that less affluent, less educated, and less English-proficient parents have fewer interactions with the school."

Intervention Programs

Siu identifies a range of school intervention programs that have been developed for at-risk Asian Americans, from preventative programs for preschool and kindergarten children to programs that focus on high school students, from programs that focus on families to programs that focus on low literacy. But most of these have not been systematically or vigorously evaluated — a change Siu suggests for the future. And while many of the programs are implemented at the high school level where dropping out occurs, programs which intervene in the middle school, addressing students at a critical and vulnerable age, are as important as they are rare.

On the Right Track, a three-year program for Cambodian, Mein-Lao, and Filipino high-risk middle school students in East Oakland and Union City, California, exemplifies the need for program evaluation, revision, and continued development to meet the needs of at-risk Asian American students. Students were offered year-round tutoring and individual and group counseling with counselors who were college graduates with ethnic backgrounds similar to the youth. As well, ethnic activities in the schools and community were implemented to achieve the program's "ambitious objectives:" to prevent drug/alcohol abuse and criminal behavior, and to increase school achievement, appreciation of own ethnicity, and parents' capability as care givers. The program helped 70% of the participants matriculate but their GPAs fell over the course of the program.

Recommendations for Research

Clearly, the educational needs of Asian American students vary greatly according to their ethnic, economic, and historical backgrounds. It is important, Siu finds, to study all Asian ethnic groups and their variable circumstances in a balanced way. For established at-risk programs that address the needs of at-risk Asian American students, Siu suggests that, "more rigorous research designs need to be employed to evaluate the effectiveness, impact, and efficiency. For fledgling programs...formative evaluation relying on qualitative data has its place."

Siu concludes that, "This should not be the time to discontinue programs for at-risk Asian American students due to lack of understanding or inadequate research. Rather, to unravel the complexities of Asian American student achievement and the lack thereof, we need to build upon and expand the current knowledge base of this population...." ■

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Community and Societal Factors Related to Risk

"Educational achievement does not take place in a vacuum but in a community and societal context," says Siu. Chinese Americans and Japanese Americans have had time to develop social networks and establish community role models. In comparison, newer immigrants — like those from Southeast Asia — have not. Community development of support services such as work-study, recreational, and mentoring programs has not been sufficient to meet the needs of many Southeast Asian students.

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Parent Involvement Shifts from 8th to 12th Grade to Focus on College Attendance

THE INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS IN THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION CLEARLY SHIFTS FROM A FOCUS ON MONITORING A CHILD'S INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIOR IN EIGHTH GRADE TO A FOCUS ON ENDORSING THE CHILD'S LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION IN TWELFTH GRADE. AND BY THE TWELFTH GRADE, THERE ARE CLEAR AND CONSISTENT DIFFERENCES OF RACE AND ETHNICITY IN PARENT INVOLVEMENT WITH THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION AND IN THE ACTIONS THEY TAKE TO SECURE FUNDS FOR COLLEGE.

CRESPAR researchers Sophia Catsambis and Janet E. Garland, of Queens College and CUNY, analyzed over 13,000 parent surveys and interviews from the National Educational Longitudinal Studies (NELS) of 1988 and 1992 to compare the overall continuity and change in parent involvement between years and across the categories of Asian American, Latino American, African American, and White. They examined measures of parent involvement such as parents' installation of rules at home for behavior and study, parents' participation in course selection, children's enrollment in classes outside of school, content of school communication, expectations of how parents would pay for college, and many others.

Catsambis and Garland find that when their child is in the eighth grade, 90% of parents have aspirations for more than a high school education. This increases to 97% by the twelfth grade, reflecting the fact that these students have made it almost through high school. More dramatically, the expectation for children to receive post-baccalaureate degrees increases from 22% to 41%, almost doubling. By the twelfth grade, Asian American and African American parents have the highest educational expectations for their children, with 56% and 53% expecting post-baccalaureate education respectively. The greatest increase in expectations is among African Americans, from 23% in the eighth grade to 53% in the twelfth grade. "Surprisingly," note Castambis and Garland, "White parents tend to have the least expectations for post-baccalaureate degrees for their teens" with only 33% expecting their child to attain an M.A. or above.

As students near high school graduation, "parents become increasingly concerned about their teen's further education and about the effects of high school programs on post-secondary opportunities," say Catsambis and Garland. Thus, rules on homework and maintenance of grade average decrease as much as twenty percent between the two data sets while parents' participation in course selection more than doubles by the 12th grade. Both parents and schools tend to place more emphasis on academic programs and parental involvement in school in the twelfth grade and less emphasis on students' individual behaviors.

Financing the Future

Half of all parents have begun saving money for college by their child's eighth grade, mostly in savings accounts. In other means of savings, more African Americans bought insurance policies and more Asian Americans made investments in stocks and real estate. By the eighth grade, 42% of Asian Americans already had over $10,000 set aside, compared to 23% of Whites, 11% of Latinos, and 8% of African Americans.

By the twelfth-grade, most expected to finance their teen's further education through grants and scholarships, but only about one-half had applied for such programs by the spring of the student's senior year and about one-fourth had talked to representatives about financial aid. Overall, a higher percentage of African American, Latino, and Asian American parents than White parents report that they have limited information about ways to finance their children's college education.

Racial and Ethnic Differences

While there are general trends in parent involvement, Catsambis and Garland indicate that parents of different racial/ethnic backgrounds approach issues of parental involvement and financing post-secondary education differently.

As noted, *Asian Americans* have very high educational expectations for their children. Communication with schools,

can parents are involved in the children's academic opportunities in a different way, such as, by exercising school choice and selecting private education." In fact, 36% of Asian American students were enrolled in academic-related private lessons or in private schools by twelfth grade, the highest percent of all other ethnic groups. These Asian American parents also take actions to secure funds for their teen's college education earlier than other parents and expect to finance their child's college education primarily through savings.

Latino parents report the highest degree of at-home supervision throughout the years. In an interesting shift, they have relatively low levels of involvement regarding parent/school contacts in the eighth grade, but by the twelfth grade, they report the highest educational contacts with school despite difficulties in communication with school personnel. Latino parents spent more time than any other group in common activities with their children.

African American families have as high educational expectations for their children as do Asian Americans. They concentrate on improving teen's opportunities beyond high school by seeking information and encouraging graduation and college. African Americans tend to maintain strict supervision at home until twelfth grade, when they loosen their levels of teen supervision. African American parents experience the sharpest between-grades drop in school-initiated contacts regarding student progress. This may be, Catsambis and Garland say, "due to a drop in problematic behaviors of these students during high school." African American parents have more knowledge about sources of financial aid than Asian American and Latino parents and about the same amount of knowledge as White parents (except for private education loans).

White parents have high levels of interaction with both the school and the larger community during their teen's eighth and twelfth grades. However, they are the least likely to seek information about higher education, to encourage their children to complete high school and attend college, or to help their children learn about post-secondary opportunities. Catsambis and Garland note that these parents may seek to enhance their children's future opportunities through other means, such as maintaining high levels of parent/teen communication and closely supervising academic progress in high school. These findings may also indicate that White parents are simply more secure in assuming that higher education opportunities will be available to their children if they desire them.

Catsambis and Garland note that, overall, their findings indicate that parents would greatly benefit from programs that inform and direct their efforts to finance their child's post-secondary education. Such information and guidance would be especially helpful for minority parents, many of whom may not be adequately informed about financing possibilities and resort to either taking on an additional job or asking assistance of family members. Given the enthusiasm and expectations of parents to continue their children's education, and the rising costs of post-secondary education, information and guidance "could become critical in enhancing the future opportunities of many students, especially those from minority and disadvantaged backgrounds." ■

Effects on Achievement and Best Designs of Volunteer Tutoring Programs Not Yet Known

THE *AMERICA READS CHALLENGE* MAKES A NATIONAL COMMITMENT TO THE GOAL THAT EVERY CHILD WILL READ INDEPENDENTLY AND WELL BY THE END OF THIRD GRADE. THE PRIMARY MEANS OF ACHIEVING THIS GOAL IS TO RECRUIT ONE MILLION VOLUNTEERS TO TUTOR CHILDREN IN READING IN SCHOOLS AND IN COMMUNITY SETTINGS. THE CLINTON ADMINISTRATION HAS PROPOSED AN ESTIMATED $2.75 BILLION TO FUND THE EFFORT. THE FUNDING, AND THE DETAILS OF THE PROGRAM, ARE CURRENTLY BEING EXAMINED IN CONGRESS.

This is an ambitious and important challenge for America's children, says CRESPAR researcher Barbara Wasik, but several issues regarding volunteers and the role that they play in tutoring need to be carefully addressed if the program is to improve the reading performance of young children.

The most important factor in the success of the *America Reads Challenge* is how these volunteers can be effectively used to tutor children in reading. All over America, school administrators, principals, and community activists are scrambling to identify and/or develop volunteer tutoring programs that can be used in their schools and communities. Unfor-

tunately, there are few guidelines for selecting or developing these programs. Before millions of volunteers begin their tutoring efforts, it is important to systematically examine the role they can play and the kind of training they will need to be effective in their volunteer role.

Literally hundreds of grassroots tutoring programs have been developed and are being used in schools and communities, according to Wasik. There is great variation among these programs. Some have written materials for the tutors to follow; other programs rely mostly on oral dissemination of information. Some have student materials; most do not.

Also, since many of these programs were developed to fulfill a specific need in a particular school, little attention has been paid to evaluating or disseminating the programs. What has occurred is that many programs are being implemented across school districts with little evidence of their effectiveness.

Effectiveness of Volunteer Tutoring

Wasik conducted a comprehensive review of the evidence presented by 16 volunteer tutoring programs to evaluate their effectiveness for increasing student reading achievement. These 16 programs either had some kind of evaluation research behind them or were those noted by America Reads as being examples of volunteer tutoring programs.

But good program evaluations were rare, Wasik found.

First, the 16 programs were all she could find among the hundreds being used that met either of the above criteria.

Second, five of the programs offered as examples had no evaluations available.

Third, nine of the programs that were evaluated either lacked comparison groups or had other serious problems with their evaluation methods, making it impossible to determine if any gains found for students were really due to the program or to other factors.

"We need to understand if volunteers can make a significant contribution to our children's literacy development."

In the end, Wasik found only two programs — the Howard Street Tutoring Program and the School Volunteer Development Project — that had scientifically sound evaluation data on the effects of volunteer tutors on children's reading outcomes. Both of these evaluations found positive effects on children's reading, but both used sample sizes of only 50 children, and the School Volunteer Development Project was terminated during the 1980s.

Making Volunteer Tutoring Effective

Wasik stresses that there is no evidence to suggest that volunteer tutoring cannot be effective. "But there is insufficient evidence that the programs improve children's reading achievement, and less evidence concerning what forms of volunteer tutoring programs are most likely to work."

A slew of questions remain to be answered about the most appropriate designs for volunteer tutoring programs.

Should tutors be paid? Do tutors' own education and background matter? How much training do tutors require? Who should do the training? How much monitoring and supervision is enough? Are specific student materials essential? If so, what kinds of materials would be appropriate and effective? How important are diagnosis and prescription, and who should do it? Should tutoring activities be closely connected to the classroom instruction or separate from it? Should they take place during school hours or after school? Are there particular types of students most and least likely to benefit from tutoring by volunteers?

These questions need to be answered and credible evaluations of the effects of volunteer tutoring need to be conducted, Wasik concludes. "If money is allocated to make America Reads a reality, a specific amount...needs to be set aside to develop replicable models and to evaluate the effectiveness of these programs in rigorous research designs....We need to understand if volunteers can make a significant contribution to our children's literacy development." ■

Many Students Enrolled in Higher Education Had School and Parental Guidance

High school graduates who went on to higher education were more likely to have had school and parental guidance — particularly regarding financial aid — than students who didn't continue their education, finds a new study by researchers Stephen B. Plank and Will J. Jordan. The study analyzed data from the National Education Longitudinal Study (NELS:88) on high school students with similar academic records and levels of family wealth to determine whether or not they planned to enroll in four-year colleges or universities, two-year community colleges, or technical schools. ▪ Plank and Jordan found that students who received relevant assistance from their high schools — such as how to complete applications and financial aid forms and write personal essays — were most likely to attend postsecondary institutions, particularly four-year colleges. ▪ Getting financial aid information was particularly important, the researchers note. Students without such information were significantly more likely to attend two-year schools part-time, if they enrolled at all. "These results are consistent with the speculation that failure to investigate and secure sufficient financial aid can have the effect of forcing an individual to pursue the less expensive routes of part-time postsecondary education or no enrollment," they assert. ▪ Plank and Jordan also discovered that students who went on to attend college full-time had had ongoing discussions with their parents about high school coursework, grades, college applications, entrance examinations, and other matters related to postsecondary preparation. These discussions typically began by the tenth grade. ▪ Despite these findings, the researchers warn that "there is not enough evidence to claim that, in practice, simply increasing a student's levels of information, guidance, and action" makes students more likely to go to college. But "specific actions such as early planning and preparation for the SAT are surely associated with a larger constellation of aspirations, actions, and opportunities for the members of our sample." ▪ *Reducing Talent Loss: The Impact of Information, Guidance, and Actions on Postsecondary Enrollment* (Report No. 9) ■

Cooperative Learning Program Helps Bilingual Students Improve Literacy Skills

A cooperative learning program enabled limited English proficient students to improve their reading and writing skills in both their native Spanish and English, according to a new study by researchers Margarita Calderón, Rachel Hertz-Lazarowitz, Gary Ivory, and Robert Slavin. The study compared second- and third-grade students participating in two different transitional bilingual programs. Both programs helped students increase their literacy proficiencies, first in Spanish and then in English. One group of students learned through traditional literacy practices, including round-robin oral reading and workbook activities. The other group of students was enrolled in a cooperative learning program, called Bilingual Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (BCIRC). ▪ BCIRC students worked together on speaking, listening, reading, and writing activities. For example, after listening to a teacher read a story, students read it aloud in pairs, alternating sentence by sentence and then paragraph by paragraph before reading silently on their own. Then the pairs worked together to answer questions about story elements and vocabulary words and to write meaningful sentences using the vocabulary. ▪ Teachers explicitly taught BCIRC students writing skills and reading comprehension strategies, including how to identify main ideas, draw conclusions, and make predictions. ▪ The researchers found that after accounting for all students' performance in kindergarten — before students received either traditional or BCIRC literacy instruction — BCIRC second graders scored higher on the writing component of a Spanish assessment than did the other students. They also performed slightly better on the reading component. BCIRC third graders scored significantly higher on the reading component of an assessment in English than did their peers. Moreover, the researchers add, students' performances on the assessments improved as they continued in the BCIRC program. ▪ *Effects of Bilingual Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition on Students Transitioning from Spanish to English Reading* (Report No. 10) ■

School's Detracking Efforts Enhance Learning Opportunities for All Students

Efforts to detrack English and history classes at one racially mixed California high school promise to extend equal education opportunities to all students and to end the inadvertent class segregation that often contributes to racial tensions and stereotypes among students. ▪ In response to a substantial achievement gap that, while not racially motivated, admittedly "had racial implications," Liberty High School abandoned its homogeneous ability groupings for ninth-grade English and history classes in favor of paired English/history core classes carefully balanced by both race and ability. Teachers taught in pairs, linking the subjects' curricula and adding a multicultural emphasis. ▪ "The idea behind the creation of the core program was not to dilute the curriculum, academic standards, or the quality of education, but to make the access and learning opportunities traditionally available only to high-track students accessible to all," writes Robert Cooper in a report that examines the students' perceptions of the program. ▪ According to the students, the school is progressing toward its goals. Overall, students were positive about the English/history core, particularly in terms of their own enjoyment of and engagement in the classes. Furthermore, findings suggest that the core created richer and more equitable learning opportunities for students who had not experienced them before, without lessening the academic rigor for previously high-tracked students. And the new multicultural focus of the classes, Cooper reports, added to the academic challenge for many students. ▪ More importantly, these positive outcomes seemed to correlate to the level of program implementation, which varied among pairs of teachers. Although the average academic performance of students did not vary significantly, student engagement and enjoyment were higher among those who reported strongest implementation of the core's intended educational practices. ▪ *Detracking in a Racially Mixed, Urban High School* (Report No. 12) ■

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RESILIENCE AND CULTURAL INTEGRITY. Resilient children in elementary, middle, and high schools continue to succeed despite the odds. Center research is examining how these children cope with exposure to violence, how they transition through levels of schooling, and how they function in out-of-school environments. Experimental and naturalistic studies are examining classroom instructional practices and classroom contexts that emphasize the cultural integrity of low-income African American schoolchildren.

EARLY EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT. Early intervention programs hold great promise, but children's achievement gains don't stand up over time. Center researchers are examining how effective early intervention coupled with effective elementary school programs could be the key to continued success.

SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM INTERVENTIONS. Components of effective education exist at all levels of schooling; most need further specification, more rigorous evaluation, and integration into theory- and research-based comprehensive programs such as the Talent Development models. Center researchers are evaluating the effects of components such as after-school programs, performance assessment, literacy programs, responsive teacher teams, career academies, and so on.

LANGUAGE MINORITY. Working with schools to develop and evaluate more effective bilingual education programs, Center researchers are examining curricular interventions, two-way bilingual programs, schools that focus on schoolwide biliteracy, the Spanish version of Success for All, and the use of teacher learning communities in professional development. A series of studies are being carried out on effective American Indian education.

SCHOOL, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS. This work is concentrating on developing, evaluating, and moving effective programs and practices of school-family-community partnership into use in schools nationwide. A specific program of partnership—the SAFE START violence prevention program—addresses the needs of children and families in violence prone communities.

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